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ABSTRACT

This volume contains descriptions of five community work education councils that have broadened their agendas from a focus on youth issues to include serving adult learners by improving adults' access to education and training and by improving the articulation between work and learning institutions that serve adults in the community. Included in the volume are case studies of the following work education councils: The Charleston Trident Work Education Council in Charleston, South Carolina; the Worcester Area Career Education Consortium in Worcester, Massachusetts; the Sioux Falls Area Community Education Work Council in Sioux Falls, South Dakota; the Community Careers Council of Oakland, California; and the Greater Portland Work Education Council in Portland, Oregon. Each case study contains a history of the council that touches upon the following topics: the program setting, project objectives, major project activities, outcomes of the project, and future plans. (MN)

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SERVING ADULT LEARNERS

Collaborative Approaches in Five Communities

by
Stephanie Lang Barton

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The National Institute for Work and Learning

The National Institute for Work and Learning was established in 1971 by a group of corporate and academic leaders for the stated purpose of "helping to better meet the nation's human resource needs." The Institute's agenda is to improve the relationships between institutions of work and of learning, to facilitate transitions between school and work for youth and between work and school for adults, and to better relate the economy's skill needs to their supply.

The means to these ends have taken a variety of forms during the last decade, including action experiments and pilot programs, case studies of successful practices, policy studies in which the results of research have been synthesized for action uses, creating information networks, and conducting research when that was found to be a necessary step before action.

While the means vary, a common thread runs through all Institute undertakings: the pursuit of collaborative efforts among employers, educators, unions, service organizations, and government, to get work-learning problems resolved, to stimulate private sector initiatives, and to help this collaborative approach operate at the local level.

This publication reports on a project made possible by a grant from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation.

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Contents

	Page
Foreword	7
Acknowledgments	8
Community Collaboration for Adult Learners	9
The Charleston Project, Charleston, South Carolina	12
The Worcester Project, Worcester, Massachusetts	21
The Sioux Falls Project, Sioux Falls, South Dakota	30
The Oakland Project, Oakland, California	40
The Portland Project, Portland, Oregon	50
What Have We Learned?	59
Next Steps	63

Foreword

In 1976, the National Institute for Work and Learning (NIWL) organized 21 local education-work councils to smooth the transition from school to work for young people. After these councils became experienced, it was our objective to encourage them to expand their agendas to include helping adults resume their education, for the time has long passed when education at the beginning of life is sufficient in a society and economy undergoing rapid change.

Financial support from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation has enabled NIWL and five collaborative councils to work on an adult learning agenda from the fall of 1980 to the fall of 1982. We very much appreciate that financial support, and the continuing personal interest of Arlon Elser from the Kellogg Foundation.

The project has been led by Richard Ungerer at NIWL. The work in the five communities has been directed by Ann Baker in Charleston, South Carolina; Bob Sakakeeny in Worcester, Massachusetts; Vic Pavlenko in Sioux Falls, South Dakota; Frankie Arrington in Oakland, California; and Carol Stone in Portland, Oregon. The quality of the efforts in these communities has strengthened our conviction that a collaborative effort at the local level among employers, educators, unions, and local government can significantly improve the relationship between work and learning, with the result of enhancing lives at the same time that we improve skills of the workforce in the interest of the economy as a whole.

It is our hope that the experience of these five councils, as herein described, will encourage other communities to undertake similar efforts and will help them in doing so.

Paul E. Barton
Executive Vice President
National Institute for Work and Learning

Acknowledgments

In writing this publication, I have drawn heavily on the reports of the five local project directors: Ann Baker, Bob Sakakeeny, Vic Pavlenko, Frankie Arrington, and Carol Stone. Many of the words herein are theirs, for which I thank them. Rich Ungerer, Project Director at the Institute, has provided overall guidance and encouragement.

Stephanie Lang Barton
September 1982

Community Collaboration for Adult Learners

In the fall of 1980, the National Institute for Work and Learning received a two-year grant from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation to help five community work-education councils broaden their agendas from a focus on youth issues to include serving adult learners by improving adults' access to education and training and improving the articulation between work and learning institutions serving adults in their communities.

The Institute had been working for several years with 30 collaborative work-education councils that bring together employers, educators, union leaders, government representatives, and representatives of local service agencies to assist young people in their communities who are in education-work transitions. Most of these councils do not run programs themselves, but rather bring together existing education and work institutions to work jointly on youth transition issues, with the council developing and providing information on the community's needs and resources and serving as a coordinating and catalytic agent.

The amount of money for each council's expansion to develop an adult agenda has been relatively small—$10,000 a year for two years—primarily to support council staff time for the project. Additional monies have supported Institute staff time to identify the councils for participation, to provide them with ongoing assistance in their agenda development, and to bring the five council directors together periodically to share information and ideas about their projects. This small amount of financial assistance plus the Institute's technical assistance has had a significant impact on how adult education and training are perceived, coordinated, and delivered in these five communities.

The five participating councils, the Trident Work-Education Council in Charleston, South Carolina; the Worcester Area Career Education Consortium in Worcester, Massachusetts; the Sioux Falls Area Education-Work Council in Sioux Falls, South Dakota; the Community Careers Council in Oakland, California; and the Greater Portland Work-Education Council in Portland, Oregon, were selected from among

12 candidates, based on their proposals for carrying out the basic project goals and after local site visits by Institute staff to assess community commitment to the project. They began their projects in the spring of 1981.

Three primary goals were established for all of the councils:

- To assess the needs of adult learners and the existing educational resources in the community;
- To develop a long-range agenda to meet these needs and to use available resources effectively; and
- To take initial steps toward agenda implementation.

These goals were based on the Institute's perceptions that more and more adults are in need of education and training and that higher education systems are becoming more flexible in order to meet these needs, but that there is little coordination of existing and potential resources in communities to expand on and take advantage of these developments. Each community sector represented in the membership of work-education councils—education institutions, employers, unions, government, and voluntary and nonprofit community service institutions—has significant resources devoted to education and training needs of adults. Working entirely separately, as is their usual tendency, they have much potential for committing additional resources to expand service delivery and programming in the 1980s. But working together, there is infinitely greater prospect of increasing opportunities and providing wider access to them to adult learners.

Within the framework of the project's three primary goals, each council was to determine its own priorities, capabilities, assessment methods, and program activities. The most significant difference among the projects is their choice of which segment of the adult population to serve. Several of the councils proposed to serve a specific segment in their initial proposals; others concluded after an assessment that a particular group of adults was in considerably greater need of coordinated services than were others.

The Charleston Council is focusing its project on the pen-

insular City of Charleston, and more specifically on the deteriorating East Side where there is an exciting revitalization project beginning. In Worcester, the project is serving women who need further education, training, and supportive services in order to enter or re-enter work or to change careers. In Sioux Falls, South Dakota, the project is serving young adult Indians, and in Oakland, California, Indochinese refugees. The Portland Council in Oregon is working to assess opportunities available to middle-aged and older adults and to facilitate new linkages among the public and private institutions that provide services. These choices have, of course, created large differences among the projects, thus allowing the project as a whole to provide a broad scope of experience for other communities to draw upon.

This publication describes in detail the development of the Adult Learners Project in each of the five communities and discusses the common threads in their experiences. Specific examples of how collaborative problem-solving and collaborative action can begin to remove barriers to adult learning are presented in the following chapters.

Portland Community College

The Charleston Project
Charleston, South Carolina

The survey is providing hard-to-gather, credible information about adults' needs, enabling informed decisions for institutional change. The information generated is affecting plans for educational programs in terms of course content, location, and times offered.

The Setting

The Charleston Trident Work-Education Council was organized in 1976 to serve a three-county area. The Council has developed an information base on local youth employment and has provided technical assistance to local school advisory councils. In 1977, the Council began a Summer Work-Education Program for educators, through which about 30 educators work in local businesses and industries to give them a more accurate view of occupations to share with their students. The Council has also worked with local postsecondary institutions to better train educators in career awareness and general education skills. Those collaborative efforts have been so successful that the Council was eager in 1981 to broaden its agenda to include other adult initiatives.

This is a particularly opportune time to begin collaborative planning for adult education and training in Charleston. The area is enjoying vigorous growth due to numerous manufacturing plant openings and a growing base of trade encouraged by an international port facility. The city has a progressive administration concerned with the human and business needs of this flourishing community.

The higher education community is sensitive to the needs of adults, and the Technical College System in South Carolina is unusually responsive to the training needs of industry. The College of Charleston and The Citadel both have recently appointed new deans of continuing education who have brought new interest in adult learning to the Higher Education Consortium (both deans are active in the Adult Learners Project). And an Educational Opportunity Center opened in January of 1980 with a Community Component to

assist adults who want to continue or complete high school or go to postsecondary education, and a Postsecondary Component that provides counseling, tutoring, motivational activities, and seminars.

In addition, in early 1981, the city contracted with City Venture Corporation to undertake a holistic job creation and community revitalization strategy on the East Side of Charleston, a deteriorating neighborhood with an inadequate educational base, limited employment opportunities, and few support services for a primarily minority population. The city has allocated $100,000 of its Urban Development Block Grant to the program and the State Private Industry Council has added another $100,000. City Venture's strategy involves economic/industrial development, job creation, education and training, and support services.

As part of City Venture's activities, Control Data Corporation has invested $3.5 million to renovate the old American Tobacco Warehouse which is adjacent to the East Side Community Center and will house Control Data's Business and Technology Center and FAIR BREAK® CENTER. The Business and Technology Center will provide office and light manufacturing space for small businesses and core services to provide management and financial assistance. The focus at the Center and throughout the East Side is on the creation and expansion of small businesses that result in labor intensive employment.

To prepare East Side residents for the newly created jobs, City Venture will establish a FAIR BREAK CENTER, a Control Data program that aims to break down the barriers to employment, provide employment preparation training, and place participants in permanent jobs.

The Trident Work-Education Council is using the Adult Learners Project to bring these new elements in Charleston together with established institutions and organizations, to develop a base of information about adult education and training needs and resources, and to begin to work collaboratively to remove barriers adults face when seeking further education and training.

The first step in the project was to assemble an Adult Initiative Task Force. The Task Force includes representatives of employers, the institutions in the Higher Education Consortium, the Educational Opportunity Center, City Venture Corporation, the City of Charleston, the Charleston

County School District, and the Committee on Better Racial Assurance. Their initial responsibility was to identify a target area to be served by the project.

The Task Force began early exploring with City Venture Corporation possible areas of cooperation, with the result that the Council decided to target the Adult Learners Project in the peninsular City of Charleston, with particular focus on the East Side in the City Venture project area. The peninsular city includes all socioeconomic groups and has a full range of urban resources and needs; the East Side is an economically disadvantaged and depressed neighborhood.

Project Objectives

The Task Force set six objectives for the project:

- To identify and compile a listing of all existing educational resources within the peninsular City of Charleston and all regional educational resources which could be potentially available to peninsular city residents;

- To conduct a telephone survey of 300 peninsular city residents and personal interviews with 200 East Side residents in order to identify adult learner needs and barriers to meeting those needs;

- To analyze the data collected and organize it into types of educational and training opportunities needed and to distribute the data to institutions, the City, City Venture Corporation, community-based organizations, and churches that serve peninsular residents;

- To identify and analyze barriers preventing adults from obtaining education and training;

- To develop a two-phase agenda for the Work-Education Council to stimulate new, expanded, or mobile learning programs; to expand access to existing educational experiences; to penetrate major barriers; and to complement the City Venture project (the first phase will concentrate on the cross-section of the peninsular population; the second phase will focus specifically on the East Side and coordination with the City Venture project); and

- To prioritize agenda items and begin on the most critical needs and/or achievable elements.

Project Activities

During the spring of 1981, the Council began identifying government entities, educational institutions, and others involved in research or delivery of services to adults. In addition, the business community was evaluated to identify potential education and training resources that could be made more generally available to the adult population.

Early in the project, the Higher Education Consortium prepared a proposal in collaboration with the Council and the Educational Opportunity Center for funding from Title I-B of the Higher Education Act, part of which would support the preparation and printing of a catalogue of education and training resources in the tri-county area. After review of the preliminary proposal, the Consortium was invited to prepare a final, full proposal in May. Early in June, funds for the Title I-B program were eliminated by Congress. At this writing, the Council has no other resources to prepare a formal catalogue, but is hoping to get the information collected about local resources to community leaders, service agency personnel, churches, and schools in the peninsular city and request their assistance in disseminating the information to their members and clients and to the neighborhood.

Also in the early spring, the Director for Research and Planning at Trident Technical College was designing the surveys of peninsular and East Side residents. The survey questions were designed to elicit information useful to education and training institutions and other service providers and went through several reviews by Task Force members, City Venture's headquarters in Minneapolis, the Department of Urban Affairs and Metropolitan Studies at the College of Charleston, and the Director of Research at the National Institute for Work and Learning.

The telephone survey of 281 adults in the peninsular city was conducted during the late summer on three evenings by trained volunteer phone interviewers. Individuals were asked if and where they had taken courses during the past year, if and where they planned to take courses in the future, and what barriers they had faced or expected to face if they

wanted to take courses. The interviews were also used to collect names of individuals wanting educational information. Those names were later sent on to the appropriate institutions for response.

The same questions were asked of 200 East Side residents and in addition, they were asked about barriers they confronted when seeking employment or better jobs. Because of the difficulty of reaching these residents and of getting accurate information, the interviews were conducted on site. An East Side resident who has been hired by the city to act as liaison between the city and City Venture Corporation was loaned to the Council to assist in planning the personal interviews. She identified 22 East Side resident volunteers who could conduct the interviews.

An agenda for action is developing out of the survey results. Even before the data were completely analyzed, some needs were clearly apparent and work began immediately to address those needs.

- An early indication from the raw data was that lack of counseling services is a vital missing link between the unemployed and underemployed on the East Side and the jobs that may be created in the next few years. City Venture's FAIR BREAK CENTER has the potential for filling this gap and for providing basic skills education, but because of CETA cutbacks, funding was lost for supporting counselors at the CENTER. The FAIR BREAK CENTER offers participants a self-paced, individualized program using computer-based educational systems to upgrade basic skills in reading, writing, and mathematics; part-time jobs; and counseling and referral support. The counseling component, which involves both professional and peer counselors, is vital to the program to help participants break down barriers to employment caused by low self-esteem, personal problems, and lack of knowledge about career planning and job search techniques.

  The Charleston County School District, which has a representative on the Adult Initiative Task Force, alerted the Council that state adult education monies were available to the School District and suggested that the Council apply to the state to use those funds to support counselors at the FAIR BREAK CENTER. At this writing, the Council is seeking authorization to use the funds to support

several professional counselors and one peer counselor. The Council plans to train additional peer counselors, drawn from East Side residents who volunteered to conduct interviews, after the CENTER has a base of professional counselors. In addition, there is the possibility that a community counselor from the Educational Opportunity Center will be placed at the FAIR BREAK CENTER.

Control Data Corporation

- Another response to the needs indicated by the data collected was the preparation by the Council, the Higher Education Consortium, City Venture Corporation, and the National Institute for Work and Learning of a proposal to the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education. This project will respond to the needs for counseling, remedial work in basic skills, and work motivation activities, and will complement the City Venture project. Briefly, the project will use a computer gameroom and skills center located in the FAIR BREAK CENTER as an entry point into a multi-faceted skill and career development program leading to increased opportunities for East Side residents to consider careers in computer technology.

- When East Side residents were asked about the type of education they would most like to get, the most frequent response was basic skills; an astonishing 49 percent indi-

cated they would like to take courses at Trident Technical College in the near future. This need alerted the Technical College to the fact that East Side residents provided a large pool of potential students. But another survey finding indicated that lack of transportation is a major barrier for East Side residents, and Trident Tech is 20 miles from the East Side, with no public transportation available. The Technical College is taking several approaches to eliminating this barrier: setting up bus service to the campus with several stops in the East Side and along the 20-mile route, and exploring ways to bring classes and equipment into the neighborhood, perhaps by buying a recently closed school, or more likely by sharing rented space with social service agencies.

- Another barrier to taking courses appears to be discomfort with the unfamiliar college campus atmosphere. In order to eliminate this barrier and to meet the need for basic skills education, the Dean of Continuing Education at the College of Charleston is considering offering short, competency-based courses off-site, at an East Side high school or a neighborhood center.

The project's survey has already given the Charleston Council the knowledge base to begin acting as a catalyst to encourage collaborative problem resolution. And through the Task Force, various members are able to coordinate their resources.

Further analysis of the survey data has led the Council to add a couple of new items to their agenda:

- Preparation of profiles of types of people who might provide a student population for additional educational opportunities if they were offered; and

- Distribution to all Charleston institutions of samples of detailed information that could be made available to them by computer if it is useful for their planning purposes. For example, the project could provide a listing of what kinds of courses employed women plan to take or the major barriers they are encountering.

Outcomes

Although the project is not yet completed, the Charleston Council can already see some short-term outcomes:

- The survey process provided information to individuals who were interviewed, if they wanted it, regarding programs and resources currently available in the community.

- The survey is providing hard-to-gather, credible information about clients' needs to resource providers to facilitate informed decisions for change.

- The information generated is affecting institutional plans for educational programs in terms of proportion of credit/noncredit courses offered and location, time, and content of courses and programs offered.

- The project is providing a stimulus for change through increased flow of information.

- Resource providers are receiving assistance and support from the National Institute for Work and Learning and the Work-Education Council in the form of peer counselor training, data analysis assistance and interpretation, and resource identification.

- An unanticipated outcome is the effectiveness of collaboration in the inner city community on the East Side and the emergence of residents who served as an invaluable resource in the survey and who can continue to be tapped in the future as a community resource.

- The project is expanding the process of collaboration among the five Charleston Higher Education Consortium institutions, the Educational Opportunity Center, the Charleston County School District, City Venture Corporation, and the Work-Education Council. This collaboration has brought together the Educational Opportunity Center and City Venture Corporation, providing City Venture with a new resource to tap for counselors at the FAIR BREAK CENTER, and has facilitated a commitment from the County School District of funds for counselors there.

Increased collaboration is also facilitating more cooperation among institutions on the Task Force, resulting in sharing of resources such as space, staff expertise, course offerings, scheduling, and advertising, and also is bringing community-based organizations and churches together with resource providers to mobilize and invigorate the use of volunteers in response to clients' needs.

The Future

The Charleston Council is looking forward to institutionalizing the spirit of cooperation, mutual benefit, and openness to flexibility among resource providers that has been stimulated by the Adult Learners Project, and to increasing awareness of overlapping self-interests through personal contacts and information dissemination. Some hoped-for program extensions include strengthening and expanding programs for adult learners; institutionalizing, perhaps through the Educational Opportunity Center, grass roots distribution of information about the availability of learning opportunities and support services; exploring the possibility of a skills center being located on the East Side; institutionalizing the expanded volunteer effort; and improving support service delivery systems, especially child care, tutoring, and counseling services, through City Venture's efforts and the use of volunteers.

The Worcester Project
Worcester, Massachusetts

The Adult Learners Project is sewing together a patchwork quilt of existing resources and resource providers so that when a woman calls any one provider she can get a description of the support system being created to provide her with a range of needed services.

The Setting

With a population of about 162,000, Worcester is a blue collar "working class" community. Its population includes 61 different and closely knit ethnic groups.

Worcester's traditional manufacturing base has been surpassed by a growing service sector which has become the area's primary employer. There are half a dozen large industrial employers, and major non-manufacturing employers include two large insurance companies and three utilities. There is an expanding health system providing job opportunities, and local government employment is significant. In addition, "high tech" industries are rapidly moving into the area surrounding Worcester.

A piece of recent history in Massachusetts will undoubtedly affect Worcester in ways that can't yet be fully assessed. In the November 1980 election, Massachusetts voters passed Proposition 2½, a property tax-cutting measure that will dramatically reduce revenues available to older cities such as Worcester. Many public education institutions and community service agencies that have depended on tax revenues for some of their support are having to cut back staff and services.

When the Worcester Area Career Education Consortium was first formed in 1975, with the intent of bringing institutions of education, training, and employment together to focus on the problems youth were having making the transition from education to work, its initial activity was to conduct an in-depth analysis of education, training, and employment in the Worcester area.

One intriguing item came to light through this analysis: the Worcester area, for a variety of reasons, was fast ap-

proaching a time when it would suffer severe shortages of qualified workers. If it were not for the tremendous influx of women into the local labor force, this shortage of workers would have occurred a decade ago. Although the nation as a whole was experiencing a similar influx of women into the labor force, the trend was much stronger in the Worcester area than in the rest of the country.

In 1978, the Consortium commissioned a study of working women in the area, which revealed that while the labor force participation rate for women in the area was quite high (projected at 70 percent for fiscal 1981 for women 20 to 65 years old), the vast majority of women were stuck in entry level positions with no chance for advancement. The survey also identified a number of barriers to advancement, chief among them the lack of information as to where to go for support or assistance with the problems encountered when moving into or up through the workplace.

At the invitation of the Regional Office of the Department of Labor's Women's Bureau, the Consortium and several local CETA and agency staffs met in 1979 to begin mapping a programmatic response to the need for providing more services to women wishing to enter the labor force or wishing to upgrade their current position. All involved were appalled to learn how few services existed specifically for women, and that no one really knew what services were needed. This group began working on a basic needs assessment and formed the Women's Strategy Group. During the next year, membership in the Group expanded from a core group of six (which included a representative of the Consortium) to over 20 professional women representing institutions of education, training, and employment.

The Women's Strategy Group found that the greater Worcester area had a comprehensive list of education, training, and service resources, including several "manpower" training programs, ten colleges and universities, and a long list of relatively sophisticated social service deliverers. Yet professionals within this "system" experienced daily frustration when referring women to institutions for needed support services. The support necessary for women who wished to make some form of transition existed, at best, only on paper.

The Worcester Area Career Education Consortium decided to use the Adult Learners Project to continue and

formalize the assessment of services needed and available and to identify activities that will increase and improve the support system and referral process for women. While there is a range of types of "transitions" women are making and need assistance in making, the focus of the project is on women in transition from the home to work, or in transition from an entry level position to one that has a career ladder.

The underlying thesis of the Worcester project is that the need for better education and training services for adult women is obvious, and that the tendency is to rush to fill that clearly definable need without considering the barriers women face *before* they can take advantage of a resource. The overriding issue is not just to identify specific needs of women, but to identify the package of necessary services, the sequence of services, and the organizations that need to enter the delivery system at different times to provide the services. Before a woman can become a learner in order to enter the workforce or upgrade her position in the workforce, she must have some basic needs met, such as financial assistance and child care; she must have access to information and referral services to help her make decisions; and she must have access to education and training.

Project Objectives

In order to learn what services were currently available and what services were needed to help women overcome barriers to education and employment, the Consortium developed the following specific objectives:

- To define the needs of adult women in the area, and to provide a structure for a community-wide institutional response to the needs of women;

- To establish a network of individuals within a range of education, service, training, and employment institutions which are currently capable of meeting the identified needs;

- To coordinate the development of a centralized resource and referral network to provide a comprehensive and supportive delivery system of services to adult women in the area;

- To inform, through the Consortium, a larger number of individuals and institutions of the social and economic benefits of providing these services to adult women in the area, and include these other individuals and institutions in the delivery system.

The Consortium staff is working closely with the Women's Strategy Group, which has identified five "readiness" stages of support services women need. The Group is structured with one task force to work on each of these areas of need. These five readiness stages provided the categories of information sought in the project's initial inventory of services available and of unmet needs:

1. Basic needs, such as financial assistance, day care, or health care;

2. Education, from opportunities to complete high school to post-graduate studies;

3. Training, including classroom settings, on-the-job training, and apprenticeship programs;

4. Employment, including the coordination of hiring information and improving the status of working women; and

5. Special interest/support groups that could be linked to other groups to support the objectives of the Women's Strategy Group.

Project Activities

The first step in the Adult Learners Project was to send a survey questionnaire to education institutions and agencies; volunteer membership organizations; agencies that supply basic needs such as mental health counseling, temporary shelter, information and referral, and day care; and public employment and training institutions. The questionnaire asked each of these institutions and agencies what services they provided in each of the five categories.

The survey results led the Consortium and the Women's Strategy Group to take action on several fronts: the full report and recommendations for follow-up were sent to all

the agencies surveyed, and a summary was sent to a much larger list; an immediate step was taken to work on the obviously desperate need for child care before women could consider further education or employment; and plans were made to compile the resulting information on available services into a resource directory.

The survey summary was sent to agencies in social service, education, and training, and to employers, with recommendations for an agenda for action and naming the Women's Strategy Group as facilitator for individuals and agencies who had relevant information or were interested in pursuing the agenda recommendations.

The primary recommendations were as follows:

- That a coordinated information and referral system providing education and job-related information be promoted among women in Worcester and throughout the system of agencies and institutions that participated in the survey;

- The publication of two documents that would facilitate networking and information sharing: a "Women's Yellow Pages" and a catalogue of all training programs;

- That flex-time and shared job options be increased to accommodate the lack of child care facilities and to encourage increased preparation for entry into the labor force;

- That greater efforts be made by employers, counselors, and employment and training specialists to promote opportunities for education, training, and career planning for women, with a special emphasis on non-traditional areas;

- A coordinated city-wide effort for increasing day care that involves area employers, day care providers, service agencies, and parents; and

- That city departments and appropriate agencies take action to assist women with housing and transportation needs that keep many women in the community at a survival level.

The Consortium and the Women's Strategy Group were prepared to take the lead in coordinating activities to respond to the recommendations and, in the case of developing an information base for women from the survey results, to do the work themselves.

The survey had indicated that *the* major barrier facing women was the lack of low-cost, conveniently located day care facilities. Day care providers reported that all available slots were full, and that they had long waiting lists. They also noted that recent state and federal budget decisions will reduce the number of funded slots for children of low-income women in the near future, forcing many to leave work.

The Consortium staff was alerted to a recently enacted change in the tax code, making it easier for employers to offer day care as an employee benefit and sent a bulletin describing this change to several hundred employers. Since then, the City Manager's Task Force on the Status of Women in Worcester has taken on the task of meeting with agencies and companies to further inform them of both the need for child care and possible remedies. One local company has since decided to start an on-site day care operation.

In order to compile the information developed from the agency survey, the Women's Strategy Group hired a part-time Resource Coordinator to rework the survey information, check back with the agencies surveyed for accuracy of the information, send the survey again to agencies that didn't respond the first time, and put the information into a Women's Resource Directory. At this writing, the Directory has been placed in four area locations: the United Way's "First Call," a referral hot-line; the YWCA's "Why Not?" program, a career counseling program for women; the Displaced Homemakers Program; and the Women's Bookstore. The Resource Coordinator will update and add to the information and will keep the Directory current. The Resource Coordinator is working at the YWCA and her salary is currently being paid from the Kellogg grant. The Y Director's budget request for next year includes monies to continue the position at the Y's expense.

In order for the Directory to include *all* education and training opportunities, the Women's Strategy Group decided to survey area employers, who were not reached through the earlier agency survey. Employers were asked what types of training programs they are involved in, including those op-

erated in-house and those sponsored by other organizations; their present and future employment and training needs; their opinions, comments, and suggestions for preparing women to successfully enter the labor market; and what recruiting methods they had found successful. The Consortium has, as with the previous survey, disseminated the full report, and added the information to the Resource Directory. In addition, each company was asked to "post" job openings through the project; the survey found employers generally receptive to hiring women and willing to list openings in the Directories at each of the four sites.

Lin Ormondroyd

Outcomes

- The most visible immediate outcome of the project is the Resource Directory which is now available for women to refer to at four locations in Worcester.

- Because the information gleaned from the survey has been widely distributed, resource providers now have a referral network, for use by the providers and their clients.

- Another immediate outcome of the project is the sewing together of a patchwork quilt of existing resources and resource providers so that when a woman initiates a call to

any one provider she can gain a description of the support system being created to provide her with a range of needed services.

- An unanticipated outcome is the effect the project has had on the Women's Strategy Group. The Group was created by staff and members from the Consortium and several education and training institutions before the start of the project. Although the members of the Group developed a task agenda which eventually became the objectives of the project, on balance the Group was often more a support group for the individual women members than a task/goal oriented group. The development of the proposal and the implementation of the Adult Learners Project led to major changes in the composition and purpose of the Group. The Women's Strategy Group has now evolved into a "collaborative body" whose members have focused on providing services to an audience larger than themselves. The Group's member institutions have grown to 50, and there are an additional 33 individual members. Many of the members are now also part of the Women's Network, which was created specifically to provide support for individual (professional) members.

- An indirect outcome of the survey and the joint work on the project was the agreement between two Women's Strategy Group members—Clark University and the YWCA—to conduct management level courses and seminars for women at the YWCA. In addition, the Group and the Consortium are working with the Worcester Area Chamber of Commerce on the development of a pilot seminar specifically for women entering or in management positions.

- For the Consortium, collaboration has been extended in two ways: First, the Consortium was created to provide support to those institutions involved in preparing youth for the transition from education to work. Through the Adult Learners Project, the collaborative process has been extended to include adult women in transition. Second, the term "collaborative body" was initially used to describe only the official membership of the Consortium. Work on this project provided one means for the Consortium's extending the concept of a collaborative body to include dif-

ferent clusters of institutional representatives coming together to deal with short-term or long-term education and work issues.

The Future

The Worcester Area Career Education Consortium's concern with the education and employment problems of women began before the Kellogg Adult Learners Project; the project gave the Consortium the resources to go forward with an agenda for beginning to solve some of those problems. The Consortium took the initial lead in forming and supporting the Women's Strategy Group, but no longer sees a need for this "senior" role. The Strategy Group's Board has created a self-sufficient organization that is now independently recognized as a viable force. The Consortium can now become one of a large number of member organizations and institutions.

The Sioux Falls Project
Sioux Falls, South Dakota

The proposed training program is expected to place young Indian adults in the labor market in Sioux Falls, to establish financial stability for the families of the people placed through the program, to demonstrate the capacity of Indian people to maintain long-term employment, and to demonstrate the potential of collaboration to solve a difficult human and social problem.

The Setting

The Sioux Falls Area Community Education-Work Council was organized in 1977 and serves the Sioux Falls Metropolitan Area and 18 rural counties. The Council has conducted an analysis of youth transition problems, coordinated a shadow work-experience program and a speakers bureau, and prepared a slide tape presentation called "Why Work?" on attitudes about work. Although the Council previously served only youth, it has long been aware of the education-work problems faced by adults in the area. The Council is affiliated with the Center for Community Organization and Area Development and with the North Central University Center, both of which serve area adults.

Three hundred thousand people live in the area served by the Council. Over half of these people live on farms and in small towns; about 90,000 live in Sioux Falls. Most adults are engaged in farming or in jobs in agribusiness, although inmigration to the metropolitan area has been increasing due to technological change in the rural agricultural areas. As many as 2,000 American Indians may live in the area, according to spokesmen for the United Sioux Tribes.

The learning climate is somber: nearly half of all adults in South Dakota over 25 years old have not completed high school (almost double the national average) and the state has the lowest proportion in the nation of high school graduates who enter college; many adults view education as a service designed for youth; adults tend to assume that they cannot change careers without appearing to be unstable; and sex roles are stereotyped.

Four adult population groups appear to be faced with unusual barriers to access to needed education, training, and support services—barriers which limit equal economic and social opportunity: young Indian adults, whose unemployment rate is frequently five to eight times the rate for whites; single women, often displaced homemakers, who head families; young rural adults who are forced to leave farms and dying small towns without job opportunities and who are ill-equipped to compete for jobs upon arrival in the city; and older people who are severely limited by inflation and who often lack even the elements of survival.

Barriers that prevent these population groups from receiving badly needed education, training, and support services are complex and interrelated. A major problem is a pervasive lack of recognition that education is a useful solution to unemployment or underemployment. Second, in Sioux Falls, until very recently, few education and training resources existed which were sufficiently flexible or accessible to serve these needy groups. Existing educational systems are still not widely known or understood in the Sioux Falls area. Third, South Dakota has very limited economic resources; the entire state budget for every purpose is about equal to that of a large research university. Finally, while many local employers decry the lack of trained job applicants, there is limited experience or understanding of how their needs might be met through adult training systems.

In recent years, however, some unusual new agencies have been established in Sioux Falls to provide adults increased access to education and training. Three private postsecondary educational institutions established a unique federation called the North Central University Center (NCUC). The Center has established a new vocationally-oriented community college; a community education center providing education for aging people; a community health education system; and the Public Service Institute, conducting programs in management, supervision, and organizational operation. The NCUC member colleges operate a women's center and centers for experiential learning and basic skills. The community college operates the ACCESS Center, the most comprehensive counseling, testing, and personal assessment center in the Northern Plains.

The Sioux Falls public school board operates a postsecondary vocational-technical school, which has undeveloped po-

tential for service to adults, and with which the community college is negotiating for cooperative open-entry and degree programs.

Several public agencies, including CETA and the Private Industry Council, are beginning to support training for job skills for the economically disadvantaged. Other training resources include limited labor union apprentice programs and office training available from local proprietary schools.

The Education-Work Council proposed to use the Adult Learners Project to bring visibility to these various educational and training systems, to assist them to be seen as helpful and to be used, and to induce these agencies to focus more productively on the four populations most in need.

Project Objectives

The Council set for itself seven objectives for the project:

- To conduct a demographic study in the Sioux Falls area of four adult groups: young Indian adults, single female heads of households, underemployed young rural adults compelled to leave farms and villages, and low income older people;

- To conduct an evaluation of the educational needs of these four groups, focusing on their perceptions of barriers to education or job access;

- To assess the capacity of major organizations to provide education, training, and support services to these groups;

- To match the four client groups with area education, training, and support groups possessing the commitment and resources to serve their special needs;

- To provide technical assistance and consultation to service-capable organizations to improve existing programs or to design new ones where appropriate;

- To identify at least one area education, training, and support group which is most able and willing to provide new or expanded services to each of the four client groups; and

- To assist each education, training, and support group selected in launching the appropriate services.

Project Activities

The first activity of the project was the demographic study of the four client populations. The study included an evaluation of their educational needs and also provided a partial assessment of major organizations' capacities to respond to those needs. Prior studies provided very limited information about these populations. Four community-wide generalized educational needs assessments were made prior to the establishment of the community college and the ACCESS Center, but the information was badly outdated and provided no useful information about the four target populations.

For each of the four populations, the following information was compiled: existing demographic data; characteristics, needs, and barriers related to education and training as perceived by staff members of human service agencies and educational institutions that have regular contact with members of these groups; and information on employment characteristics, needs, and barriers as they relate to education and training. The information was collected from personal interviews and phone conversations with 39 staff persons in 23 agencies and organizations.

The Council ran into a number of difficulties in compiling the data: the detailed results of the 1980 census wouldn't be available for about another year, and even then multiple cross-tabulations would be necessary to produce data as specific as the Council was seeking; there are no records kept on the underemployed; the Indian population was undercounted in the 1980 census and the Council had to wait for results of a later special survey by American Indian Services; the terms "underemployed," "young adult," and "low income" do not have standard meanings among those interviewed; and some of the organizations don't record the characteristics of their clients and could give estimates only.

In spite of these difficulties, the survey resulted in a 30-page document that describes in some detail the characteristics of the four population groups, the agencies currently serving them, and agency staff perceptions of needs for and barriers to education, training, and employment.

As a result of the survey, the Council decided to focus the

project on young Indian adults, because they were clearly shown to be the group most in need, because the American Indian Services Corporation was very interested in participating, and because the Council felt that trying to serve all four groups would spread their efforts so thin as to be of little use.

There are approximately 2,000 Indian residents in the 18-county area from 26 different tribes. It is estimated that 80 to 90 percent of young Indian adults are unemployed and that they have an average education of 10th or 11th grade.

Six agencies that could serve Indians were contacted in the survey:

American Indian Services Corporation (AIS) provides a variety of emergency, referral, counseling, and advocacy services. The agency did have a full-time CETA worker dealing with employment problems, but this position has been lost due to federal budget cuts. The AIS director reported that from August 1980 to May 1981, 1,065 Indian people sought assistance from AIS. About 170 (16%) were between 18 and 30 years old.

United Sioux Tribes, Inc. operates a Summer Youth Program; a CETA program for Indians, largely identical to the standard CETA programs; a Direct Employment Program, aimed at developing job skills of the "hard core" unemployed that pays participants while they are in training; and a Vocational Education Program for penitentiary inmates and other students in the Sioux Falls area.

The **Job Service** indicated that they counsel very few Indians and that the 46 young adult Indians currently listed on their rolls as disadvantaged and seeking work are probably mostly women in the WIN program.

The **Minnehaha County CETA** program records show that from October 1980 to June 1981, 65 Indians (not broken out by age) participated in all County CETA programs.

The **Southeast Area Vo-Tech School** director estimated that 15 Indian students would enroll in the school in the

fall of 1981, but that up to 10 of these would be likely to drop out during the first few weeks of school. He noted that a variety of resources and opportunities for vocational schooling are available to Indian students such as Bureau of Indian Affairs grants and United Sioux Tribes grants.

The caseworker interviewed at **Catholic Family Services** reported that of her caseload of about 50 persons per month, approximately 25 percent are Indian, mostly young men seeking emergency assistance.

Staff at these agencies identified the following needs for and barriers to education, training, and employment:

Education and Training Needs:

- Many of the young Indians' needs are the same as for non-Indians—on-the-job training, apprenticeships, vocational education, and GEDs.
- Some organization needs to be specifically responsible for post-high school education and vocational counseling for Indians.
- Some openings at the Vo-Tech School should be specifically designated for Indians.
- There should be more Indian teachers in the schools. Currently there are two in the entire Sioux Falls School System.
- Assimilation into "the system" needs to begin at Grade 1, with programs aimed at parents to reinforce the home situation in the lower grades.
- Sioux Falls needs an Indian Center which would be responsible for some aspects of adult Indian education, such as GED preparation.

Barriers to Education:

- The bureaucracies responsible for providing aid to Indian students, e.g., BIA Education Grants, are slow. Some potential students give up before their aid comes through.

Barriers to Employment:

- Many barriers are the same as for young adult non-Indians of the same socioeconomic classes—lack of education, qualifications, work skills, and work habits; dress and grooming; social skills; and alcoholism.

- There is still employer racial discrimination in the area.

- Young Indians face cultural barriers, such as understanding of time, personal values, and religious values.

- Often there is no peer group, especially Indian peers, on the job.

- Frequently there is lack of a stable employment record.

- In some cases there is lack of housing and food.

- There is no Indian job counselor at the Job Service.

- In some cases, young Indians are unfamiliar with the white approach to life and work and are afraid to confront this gap in understanding. Whites' unfamiliarity with Indian culture provides the other side of this dilemma.

The Council's decision to focus the project on young Indian adults was reinforced by an in-depth study supported by the American Indian Services Corporation, which surveyed a representative sample of 83 Indian households in the City of Sioux Falls in the summer of 1981. The survey included a needs assessment and a feasibility study for a multipurpose Indian Center in Sioux Falls. It was conducted as an action research project, both to collect information and to identify people in the Indian community who could be tapped in the future. Some highlights of the study:

76% of the heads of household are women;

71% have lived in the Sioux Falls area for less than two years;

25% are unemployed, and a high incidence of part-time,

seasonal, and occasional employment indicates significant underemployment;

61% reported incomes of under $5,000;

51% do not have a telephone;

40% reported needing career counseling;

90% think there is a need for an Indian Center;

51% would use the Indian Center for education or as a place to study.

A major finding of the survey is that the Indian people in Sioux Falls are *families* and the recommendations from the study reflect this finding in their emphasis on providing services with a family focus.

The second of the study's five recommendations is that education and job training for Indians be given high priority, based on the following findings:

> The majority of Indians coming to and residing in the Sioux Falls area are in their 20's and 30's . . . They come to Sioux Falls relatively untrained and with at least an 8th grade education. Close to 60 percent have completed their high school education. The Indian population is varied in its occupational and job experience. The Indian community (40 percent) wants job counseling in a variety of blue collar and professional occupations. The majority are active and eager participants in the local labor market, but suffer from a lack of full-time employment opportunities.

Work is now proceeding with the American Indian Services Corporation and the North Central University Center to develop a pilot training program, which will be ready for implementation by the end of September 1982. The planning process involves joint planning meetings of staff people from AIS, NCUC, and the Education-Work Council; creation of an advisory committee of business people to identify available jobs; and planning for long-term funding by AIS and the Council for the pilot program.

The training program is expected to place up to 20 young Indian adults per year in the labor market in Sioux Falls, to establish financial stability for the families of the people placed through the program, to demonstrate the capacity of Indian people to maintain long-term employment; and to demonstrate the potential of collaboration to solve a difficult human and social problem.

Sioux Falls Area Education-Work Council

Outcomes

Because the training program for young Indian adults won't begin until the fall of 1982, most of the outcomes listed here are projected rather than already achieved.

- The most visible outcome, of course, will be the training program itself, which will be unique and the Council staff hopes will be replicable in other urban areas with significant Indian populations.

- A major training facility for Indians, an off-reservation boarding school about 50 miles north of Sioux Falls, is targeted for closing. If it is in fact closed, the Adult Learners Project's training program would provide an alternative delivery system for training of young Indians.

- In spite of federal cutbacks, there are still funds available for Indian people. One outcome of the project could be a rerouting of Bureau of Indian Affairs funds for training in South Dakota. Negotiations are currently taking place to accomplish this.

- As a result of the Adult Learners Project, the Sioux Falls Council is working with a population, Native Americans, with which they haven't worked before. The Council is becoming part of a new network of service providers and of people who can benefit from the Council's brokering role.

The Future

This project will not lend itself to wide dissemination. The Indian population in the United States is small; the number of Indian people in metropolitan areas is even smaller. At the same time their needs are great. This population has been repressed for over 100 years and the resulting instability of the population is the worst of any ethnic group in the country.

The prospects for dissemination are further reduced because of the limited focus being taken. The AIS study showed that the greatest stability and potential exists with young Indian adults who are living in nuclear families. This project will focus on existing or potential wage earners in nuclear families, who represent a small percentage of the Indian population.

At the same time this narrow focus holds promise for extension to other areas with urban Indian populations. No other training effort in the country has ever been targeted specifically at this Indian group. The concept involved here is a good one—build from existing stability. But the concept has never been applied as this effort will apply it. If the pilot training effort is implemented and is successful, replication could be done in a number of cities, such as Phoenix, Tucson, Denver, and Minneapolis.

The Oakland Project
Oakland, California

It was assumed that each Indochinese group was familiar with the needs of the other groups. The survey proved that this is not true. The Vietnamese, Laotians, and Cambodians each have needs that the other groups were not familiar with or aware of. The project has helped to develop a new network among these communities and to identify Indochinese who can help design and implement programs to meet their varied needs.

The Setting

The Community Careers Council of Oakland was formed in 1976 to bring about new initiatives in career development for young people and to establish a youth policy forum. The Council is co-sponsored by the New Oakland Committee and the Peralta Community College District. The New Oakland Committee, composed of three caucuses—business, labor, and minority—is dedicated to improving the business environment and employment opportunities in Oakland. The Peralta Community College District operates four colleges in Alameda County and one in Plumas County, areas with high concentrations of economically disadvantaged people, unemployed people, and unskilled workers, including large numbers of people who are seeking retraining and upgrading of skills.

The Community Careers Council is composed of 30 members from the business, labor, and minority caucuses of the New Oakland Committee; the education, government, and community agency sectors; the Community College District; and local unions.

A major activity of the Council has been a clearinghouse that brokers relationships between school and community agencies serving youth and a variety of business and public agencies employing persons in a wide range of occupations. The clearinghouse provides a contact and scheduling service that coordinates contacts with employers for students involved in career education activities at four community colleges, eleven Oakland high schools, numerous community

agencies, and the City of Oakland CETA youth programs.

The Council is currently involved in a program of the Western Institute for Social Research to help community workers learn to use action research methods and to teach these methods to other community workers. The relationship between the Council and the Institute in this action research project (supported in part by the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education) has helped the Council to begin broadening its agenda beyond a youth focus, and to conduct the needs assessment in the Adult Learners Project.

Oakland is a complex urban community. It is the second most populous city in the five-county San Francisco Bay area with a population of almost 340,000. Oakland's labor force of about 171,000 is largely constituted of people from 25 to 44 years old and includes substantial numbers of ethnic minorities. The labor force is characterized by low to moderate levels of educational achievement and by a correspondingly low level of marketable job skills. The Equal Employment Department attributes Oakland's high unemployment rate (currently 9.5 percent for adults) to this concentration of low-skilled and inexperienced job seekers. Labor market projections for the city indicate that there will be a decrease in opportunities in fields which depend upon low-skilled manual labor, but show growth in fields which depend upon administrative, technical, and clerical skills.

New capital growth and economic development are projected for the City of Oakland. The expansion of business and trade activities projected for downtown could provide new opportunities *if* people's education, training, and related preparation will allow them to capitalize on the new developments.

In fact, many adults in the Oakland area face career difficulties as a consequence of the changing economic mix in the Bay area. The plight of those whose training is outdated or irrelevant to present demands for skills, and of those with minimal employment history, is in many ways as serious as that of youth, both for the individuals involved and for the community as a whole. Furthermore, a rapidly increasing new Indochinese refugee population faces language barriers, a new lifestyle, and a new world of work.

There is evidence that the obstacles to self-directed education and training among adults resemble those that were

identified for young people: a lack of adequate information about the structure of the labor market and an inability to assess one's own characteristics in relation to various career demands. Beyond these obstacles is the further problem of identifying the most appropriate route to career goals through public and private educational channels.

Given the characteristics of the labor force and the changing economic climate with changing demands for job skills, it is a particularly opportune time to identify the most cost effective means of assisting unemployed, underemployed, and transitional adults.

Project Objectives

The Community Careers Council set for itself three major objectives to address an adult agenda:

- To conduct an assessment of adult needs and the obstacles to self-directed solutions in the Oakland community;
- To develop pilot projects, including follow-up evaluation, to assist adults in the process of self-assessment, career choice, and the selection of appropriate educational routes; and
- To expand the collaborative network of education and employing organizations in order to accommodate the identified needs of an adult clientele.

The Council designed the Adult Learners Project to operate in cycles, with each cycle covering some of the same issues as the previous one, but at a deeper, more comprehensive level:

- The first cycle consisted of contacting people from community-based organizations, the public and private sectors, and educational institutions, to get their advice on the overall project design and the issues to be addressed.
- The next cycle involved identifying and training low-income people from each of several target populations to interview their peers about their education, training, and employment needs and experiences, and their knowledge of available services.

- The third cycle involved a workshop for service providers and members of the target populations to disseminate and share the information gathered through the interviews, to discuss programs that might be developed to respond to identified needs, and to determine the usefulness of further needs assessment and resource identification.

- The fourth cycle began to address some needs of the adult clientele, while continuing to do some further needs assessment and resource identification.

- The final cycle is to be another round of meetings to gather and share further information, to discuss programs being developed, and to decide what steps should be taken beyond the Kellogg-funded project.

Project Activities

The first project activity was to convene a Task Force to advise and assist in the project, beginning by refining the project objectives. The Task Force identified several groups of adults clearly in need of education, training, and employment services: low-income, older adults; middle-aged black men; welfare mothers; non-English speaking Hispanics; and Vietnamese. The Task Force designed a plan that would begin with a needs assessment for each of the population groups, with the possibility of finding that one group was in such need of information and services that the project would then focus on that group. The needs assessment was to be carried out by first identifying people in each target population who could interview their peers, developing a survey method, training the interviewers, conducting the interviews, and analyzing the data to determine the unmet needs for education, training, and employment services, as well as the groups' knowledge of existing services. On the basis of this data analysis, the Council would begin pilot projects or help others to begin such projects, with the assistance of the interviewers and others from the target populations, to address the identified unmet needs.

Early in the project, the Task Force presented this plan to a meeting of about 25 community representatives from community-based organizations, the public and private sectors, and educational institutions. The community group agreed

that the basic project design was appropriate, but strongly recommended that the project focus its efforts on the Indochinese community, including not only Vietnamese, but also Laotians and Cambodians. The group felt that of all the possible populations in need of information and services, the Indochinese communities have by far the greatest needs, and that this fact is little recognized by the larger community. The group also felt that members of the Indochinese communities have the greatest difficulty applying their skills to their present environment.

Because of the wisdom of this recommendation, the Council decided to alter its project plans and to accept the community representatives' collective recommendation to explore with Indochinese service providers and community leaders the possibilities of surveying local Indochinese populations.

The first step was to identify those people in the Indochinese communities to whom the Council could describe the project and get advice as to its desirability and feasibility, and also as to how to proceed. After speaking with leaders in these communities, the Task Force and the Council were convinced that the project was needed in the Indochinese communities, and, based on the advice of Indochinese service providers, decided to include the Laotian and Cambodian communities in the survey.

Because little background information was available about the varied Indochinese communities, the Council had to delay the beginning of the needs assessment to gather basic information about the populations living in the Oakland area and to identify people from within those communities who could effectively conduct the interviews. In order to compile this information, Council staff went back to the people who work in agencies that teach or otherwise serve the Indochinese people and to leaders of each community.

These interviews produced basic information on the characteristics of each community. For example, the Laotian group includes three tribes, as well as an urban population. Each tribe speaks a different language and two of the tribes have no written language. A majority of the people in all three tribes have few, if any, skills that can be transferred to their new urban environment. In the Cambodian community, the various groups do understand each other's languages and seem to have a higher level of education. Although the community seems to be more cohesive than the Laotians, few

organizations to assist Cambodians were identified.

The staff also found that there are two quite different Vietnamese populations in the Bay area: those who arrived in the United States prior to 1975 and those who arrived after 1975. The pre-1975 arrivals are primarily professionals and para-professionals. In order to enter the States, they had to have a sponsor or be financially independent. The post-1975 arrivals are primarily farmers and laborers and came here as refugees who were aided financially by the U.S. government and service organizations, and given help with resettlement, education, and training. There is apparently some friction between the two groups, partly because of their social and economic class differences and partly because of the aid received by the refugees that the earlier immigrants didn't receive. Another distinction among the Vietnamese that sometimes causes friction is the difference between the majority of Vietnamese and the minority who are ethnically Chinese.

Before talking to the service providers and community leaders, the Council staff had no idea the problems in the Indochinese community were so severe. They learned soon that certain aspects of the plan the Task Force had developed for conducting the community interviews would not work in the Indochinese community. Interviewing methods needed to be altered to take into account the fact that the people in the Indochinese communities are very reluctant to talk openly about their experiences and concerns, even with other people in their own community. Also it was very hard to find people within the communities who could converse well enough in their own language and in English to serve as interviewers. The recruitment of interviewers took much longer than originally anticipated.

The new interviewing strategy included recruiting interviewers from the community organizations that serve the Indochinese communities, altering the training provided for the interviewers, and interviewing the interviewers as the project progressed to elicit their concerns and especially their perceptions of how the needs assessment was going.

Some sample interview questions:

- What is a typical day in your life like? How is it different from a typical day before you came here?

- Do you have neighbors, friends, or relatives who have good jobs? What kinds of jobs? How did they get them? What is there about these jobs that makes them so good?

- What kind of work did you do before you came here and what would you like to do now? What makes that practical or impractical?

- What problems are you encountering here? What's preventing you from leading the kind of life you would like to?

- How do you get information that helps you to obtain things you need, such as medical care, food, housing, education, and work?

- How do you see the roles of men and women here in your community? Are they different than in your home country? How do you feel about the roles as they are here?

- What is the nature of your ties with other people from your ethnic community? Do you see your present ties changing in the near future? How would you like to see your ties with your community and other communities change in the future?

At this writing, the Council staff and the consultant from the Western Institute for Social Research have just completed six weeks of meetings two evenings a week with the community interviewers to discuss their findings, probe deeper into the information (interviewing the interviewers and facilitating discussion among interviewers), and modify the questions asked. Because of the limited ability of most of the interviewers to write reports in English, and because of lack of funds to pay for detailed reporting, the interviewers' verbal descriptions were recorded at these evening sessions on tape and in extensive notes taken by the Council staff person and the consultant. The interviewers added much of their own experiences and feelings to the discussions.

The next step will be to analyze what was learned, the most important issues identified, and what more needs to be learned. The Council does not expect to be able to make specific recommendations as to a future program for the Indochinese, but only to make the service and community

organizations, both Indochinese and others, educational institutions, and employing agencies aware of the issues revealed.

Mario Fones

The Council staff and the consultant are now just beginning to identify tentatively what look like some major issues for the Indochinese communities:

- Difficulties in learning English: When is a person competent enough to be placed in a job and not face failure due, not to lack of job skills, but to the inability to communicate? Adults who are illiterate in their own languages, or who have no familiarity with the concept of written language, have extreme difficulty adjusting to classroom training. Within each community there are widely different levels of literacy and prior education.

- Difficulties encountered by community organizations in providing adequate services: First and foremost, funds have been cut. In addition there is a lack of trust in some formal Indochinese organizations, particularly Vietnamese, but there is often informal peer support. There appears to be a need for and the possibility of developing "self help" community groups.

- The conditions affecting the relationships between women and men are quite different in the United States than they were in the Indochinese people's home communities.

- There are different rates of acculturation for different subgroups—for different age groups, for males and females, for different socioeconomic classes.

Through the survey, the Indochinese people learned more about the needs of other Indochinese people. It was assumed that each group was familiar with the needs of the other groups. The survey proved that this is not true. Each group is quite different and each has needs that the other groups were not familiar with or aware of.

Outcomes

The Oakland Adult Learners Project has proceeded more slowly than anticipated because of the complexity of the Indochinese communities and because the Oakland needs assessment is not the conventional type done "on" or "about" a group of people, but rather is an effort to engage the people being studied in a consideration of their needs and in discussion of services and community development strategies that could be pursued by them, with them, and in some cases for them.

Although the Council is still in the process of analyzing the information gathered, some future outcomes can be projected:

- Government, educators, employers, service providers, and community people in the Bay area will know a great deal more about the needs and capabilities of the Indochinese communities as a result of the Adult Learners Project.

- The Council has entered and helped to further develop a new network of people who need assistance and who can provide help in designing and implementing that assistance.

The Future

A long-range agenda includes the following activities:

- The Council will sponsor formal discussion in the Indochinese communities on issues such as the roles of men and women, intergenerational relationships, and strategies of community development.

- The Council will assist the Indochinese service providers in developing education and training programs for community people involved in community development.

- The Council will sponsor workshops for the employing community and educational institutions to make them aware of the employment, education, and cultural needs of the Indochinese people.

The Portland Project
Portland, Oregon

Because a major problem in Portland is access to information, the Council is planning a catalogue for adults in need of education and training that will include information on education and training resources and placement agencies in the Portland metropolitan area to make those resources more accessible.

The Setting

The Greater Portland Work-Education Council was established in 1977, not to directly operate programs, but to facilitate, support, and expand other existing education-work programs for youth in the Portland area. The Council serves the entire Portland Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA), which includes three counties in Oregon and one in Washington, with a total population of over 1,250,000.

The Council's small staff and its broad-based membership of local and state representatives have ensured the Council's ability to influence local and state, public and private policy-making on a wide number of fronts, among them career education, legislation, child labor laws, economic development planning, CETA, and basic education. The Council has developed a "how-to" manual for establishing work-education councils in other areas of Oregon, has conducted a survey of attitudes of youth toward work, has conducted a survey of child labor laws in Oregon, has a task force studying proposed legislation regarding work-education issues, and has helped with the development of the Metro Private Industry Council. Participation in the Adult Learners Project is enabling the Portland Council to extend its effective brokering and catalytic processes to the education-work problems of adults in Portland and in Oregon.

Portland is an industrial city and river port in northwestern Oregon on the Willamette River. Five industries dominate Portland's manufacturing sector: metal working; food and kindred products; lumber, furniture, and timber products; electronics; and clothing. Organized labor strength in Portland is significant. The unemployment rate

in December 1981 was 10.5 percent in the Portland SMSA and a rise to 11 percent was projected by the State Employment Division for early 1982.

Despite the growth of local institutions that address the educational needs of adults—Marylhurst Education Center, Linfield College, Portland State University's Division of Continuing Education, three community colleges, the YWCA, CETA, the Northwest Labor College, state-funded displaced homemaker projects, and others—many adults remain unaware of services and resources or are unable to take advantage of those that exist. Among the significant concerns of adult service practitioners are the following:

- Lack of adequate career guidance for adults;
- Lack of adequate information about resources that could help support a return to school or training;
- Lack of a coordinated networking approach to transition services that help adults manage or balance work, family, and education activities; and
- Lack of low-risk opportunities to explore career and educational options.

Two local projects—the Education Information Center Project and the Tri-County Labor Market Information Project—have taken some first steps toward identifying institutional and employer-based resources for education and training. However, the limitations of small budgets have not permitted adequate dissemination of information or provision of services to the target groups of adults whose needs are greatest. Needs assessment has not been a focus of either project.

The Adult Learners Project is designed to build on what has been done and to take the needed next steps to improve access to information and services and to assess adult learning needs in the community.

The Council is working closely with the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL) through a subcontract which provides a staff person to the project from the Lab. NWREL has a program in Career Redirections for Adults, which has provided their staff with invaluable contacts that can be tapped for the Adult Learners Project.

Project Objectives

The Portland Adult Learners Project has eight objectives:

- To gather information necessary to assess the needs of adult learners;
- To gather additional information about the resources of existing institutions and organizations that are available or could be made available to meet the needs of adult learners;
- To develop a long-range agenda for improving adults' access to training and education opportunities;
- To encourage more efficient use of existing education and training resources;
- To facilitate institutional and private sector networking for the benefit of adult learners;
- To generate long-term support and commitment among all sectors with an interest in improvement of adult learning services;
- To identify gaps in current services to adults; and
- To recommend specific actions to fill current gaps in services to adult learners.

The Council's approach toward meeting the eight objectives was planned to include the establishment of a task force to analyze available information, two half-day community-wide workshops to encourage linkages among existing resources meeting needs of adults, development of a long-range agenda to fill in gaps in resources, and a brochure listing resources available to meet the needs of adults in the Portland area.

Project Activities

The first activity of the Portland Council was the identification of other key actors in the adult education, training, and

employment fields to alert them to the project and explore possibilities for their participation. Community institutions contacted included private sector business, industry, and labor; CETA prime sponsors; Private Industry Councils; community colleges and other training/education institutions; the State Employment Division; the State Bureau of Labor; and the City of Portland. Building this network involved several months of individual meetings for the Council Executive Director and staff, as well as larger planning meetings with community representatives. Establishing a solid foundation of community involvement was a priority early in the project in order to find out where information exists in Oregon about the needs of adults in transition and the resources to meet those needs, and in order to build a base from which to carry forward the adult transition agenda after the Kellogg funding ended.

Because of limited resources, the decision was made early to use existing surveys and studies and to interview knowledgeable individuals in order to develop information on adults' needs and resources. The project was slowed down somewhat because two vital surveys were in progress and the Council decided to delay forming an Adult Education and Training Task Force until the information from these surveys was available.

A Metropolitan Labor Market Survey that provided the base of information was coordinated by Mt. Hood Community College. (Data from this survey weren't available until the fall of 1981.) The survey was funded by a consortium including four community colleges, four CETA prime sponsors, four economic development agencies, the City of Portland, the Port of Portland, and the Oregon Occupational Information Coordinating Committee; many of the key institutions and individuals to be on the Adult Education and Training Task Force were already involved in this consortium. The objective of the Labor Market Survey was "to gather more complete and detailed household and employer data for institutional planning, including job training/development and economic development, by the public and private sector. . . ." Two surveys were conducted: 1) 6,000 households in the Portland SMSA to focus on labor force characteristics, training needs, and attitudes of individuals both in and out of the labor force toward working conditions, barriers to employment, and job training, and 2) 2,000 employers to

focus on qualitative information about training needs, staff turnover, difficulty in filling jobs, and the effects of technological changes on job duties of employees.

A second study, *Unemployment in the Portland Area*, prepared by the Metro Private Industry Council, completed in December 1981, was another important basis of information. Unlike the Labor Market Survey, this report looked at the employment and unemployment experiences of specific populations, thus giving the Council a basis for determining whether a target population should be designated for the project.

A third study on "Educational Information Systems in Oregon," sponsored by the Educational Coordinating Commission, provided information about education services. Some of that study's conclusions reinforced the Council's belief that one of the largest difficulties potential adult learners in Oregon face is simply lack of information about what is available:

- Information on education and career opportunities and options is primarily designed for and delivered to enrolled high school students.

- Significant numbers of persons are unaware of where to obtain educational and career information services, and of those who are aware, significant numbers do not make use of them for a variety of reasons.

- Oregon citizens do not have equal access to educational information services. Significant barriers to access include the location of services, the times they are available, and client eligibility requirements to use educational information services.

- Much of the current printed information postsecondary institutions make available to prospective students does not assure readability or encourage educational choices.

The Council also reviewed reports from the Educational Information Center and from several agencies serving specific population groups.

A task force was formed and began meeting in the spring of 1982. The Task Force includes members from community

colleges and the University of Oregon, the Metro Private Industry Council (whose director chairs the Task Force), the Occupational Information Coordinating Committee, Northwest CAEL (Council for the Advancement of Experiential Learning), the AFL-CIO's Human Resources Development Institute, the Senior Job Center, the City of Portland, the State Employment Division, and private sector employers. Their task is to recommend a long-range action agenda for meeting the employment and training needs of the adults in the metropolitan area. Recommendations and strategies for implementing them will be published in a brochure to be prepared at the close of the project.

The Task Force first reviewed the information collected by the Council staff in order to decide whether the project should focus on a particular population group. The Task Force initially identified a number of potential target groups: women, refugees, older workers, ex-offenders, minorities, young adults, handicapped, displaced homemakers and other labor market re-entrants, and displaced workers.

After review of the information on adult learners' needs and available resources, the Task Force recommended focusing the project on adults 40 years old and older who are in transition. The report on *Unemployment in the Portland Area* summarized the situation of the "older" worker:

> Of all the changes projected for the labor market during the balance of this century, the one with potentially the most serious consequences may well be the aging of the work force. . . .
>
> Unemployment among this group (aged 40 to 65) tends to be extremely low, even during times of high unemployment. The difficulties arise for this group if they do become unemployed. Statistics show that duration of unemployment among this group is much longer than for younger persons. (Between 25 and 44 years old, 19 percent of the unemployed are without work for 15 weeks and more; the comparable rate for those 45 and over is 28 percent.) Declining incomes attend the longer unemployment periods and many may opt for early retirement as they join the ranks of the discouraged worker. It is generally recognized that discriminative patterns in hiring tend to increase after the age of 40.

Companies tend to believe that the costs involved in hiring a person from this age group may not compensate for the costs associated with training, retirement, and a shorter anticipated duration of employment. . . .

The myth that worker productivity is impaired by age does not automatically apply at age 65. In many cases, productivity is unaffected except where hard manual labor is required. The experience and eagerness they can bring to the work environment is a potential which is severely underutilized.

Portland Community College

The Task Force was concerned that a target group be selected that is unlikely to be well-served by existing programs so that duplication of service can be minimized. The Council's Executive Director also chairs the Private Industry Council's Subcommittee on Special Target Groups and, through that experience, could assure the Task Force that while funds are being cut, there is still some money available

for other population groups, but nothing left for older workers.

Refugees were also of great concern to the Task Force members. In June of 1981, there were over 12,000 Indochinese refugees in the Portland area, with 450 new arrivals every month. Cash assistance, educational benefits, and support for other services are being cut. The Task Force recognized that often the over-40 refugee is the most difficult to place in education or employment, and decided to define the target population as 40+ adults, particularly refugees, displaced workers, and labor market re-entrants.

At this writing, the Task Force has named two subcommittees to work on two components for agenda recommendations and implementation:

- Brokering strategies that use existing services, include career planning, provide information on education and training, and facilitate on-site job exploration and work experience for those who need it, and

- Awareness and public relations activities targeted to the business and industry/agency community so that sector will become more involved in helping meet the target group employment, education, and training needs.

Additional Task Force recommendations include that "process" be emphasized to encourage inclusiveness and broad participation, emphasis be placed on preventing worker displacement, economic development be considered integral to the agenda, and alternatives for implementation be flexible.

Because a major problem in Portland is access to information, the Council is also planning a brochure for adults in need of education and training that will include information on education and training resources and placement agencies in the Portland metropolitan area to make those resources more accessible.

Outcomes

Because the project was delayed considerably while two major surveys were completed, early outcomes aren't yet evident for the target population 40 years old and older. However, several process outcomes and predictable future outcomes can be identified:

- The Council has broadened its base of support, both generally and specifically in the interests of adults. Through the early planning meetings and the Adult Education and Training Task Force, the Council staff and members have identified people and institutions in Portland that serve adult learners and workers, and have begun to help build a network among those people and institutions.

- The Council has identified and developed a baseline of information about adult learners' needs and resources to meet those needs that will help the Council and other interested organizations to continue an adult agenda after the end of the Kellogg-funded project.

- The brochure to be produced at the end of the project listing resources available to adult learners will be a first step toward breaking through the barrier of lack of information.

The Future

Council staff has begun to explore possibilities for funding to supplement this grant as well as to continue the project in the future. Possibilities are encouraging because Council members are committed to the adult project and because this project supplements, fills in gaps, and sets a course of action which expands upon work now being done in Portland. What is now necessary is a network to follow through on a long-range agenda for action. The Council expects that this project will strengthen the impetus for coordination of adult learning services well into the future.

What Have We Learned?

The Adult Learners Project has enabled education-work councils in five communities to demonstrate that collaborative problem-solving and collaborative action can begin to remove barriers to adult learning. The councils are acting as the catalysts to bring together education institutions, employers, and community service agencies in order to pool their knowledge of adult learners' needs, to develop strategies to meet those needs, and to provide their communities with information about available resources.

Although each of the five councils participating in the Adult Learners Project has chosen a different population group to serve, there have been some common threads in their experiences. Also, by addressing adult learners' needs and assessing resources in specific and quite varied locations, some general knowledge about the adult learning climate has been gained.

We Learned About the Process of Creating a Project

In order to develop an agenda to meet adult learners' needs, to use available resources effectively, and to recommend new services and resources, all five councils began from two interrelated processes: building a network of individuals and institutions that serve adults and building a base of information on adults' needs and resources available to meet those needs. Although these councils had all done precisely these same things for a number of years to enable them to assist youth in their communities, we had all perhaps forgotten how long these processes take.

Building the network takes months of meetings with individuals and bringing these individuals together to address a common problem. In Charleston and Worcester, earlier council activities with adult-serving institutions allowed this process to move fairly quickly; in Portland some new linkages had to be established; and in Sioux Falls and Oakland entirely new population groups and the agencies and institutions that serve them had to be brought together. However laudable the goals and however firmly all parties agree that

they should be and want to be involved, the building of mutual trust and the ability to work collaboratively simply takes time and it is almost impossible to say in advance how long that time may be.

The network building is vital for at least two purposes: 1) collaborative problem-solving and collaborative action, which form the heart of these projects, and 2) developing an information base, the second process that always seems to take more time than anticipated.

Each council was required to assess adult learners' needs and the resources available to meet those needs. That sounds like a straightforward task; it isn't, as was shown in the five case studies. All five councils conducted their surveys with an "action" strategy that would allow the survey process to be as immediately useful as possible to those being surveyed—that would involve them, inform them, and begin to build a network among those being surveyed, whether individual adults, service providers, educators, or employers.

The councils could have, probably much more quickly, combined existing information with a mailed survey questionnaire and designed an agenda without ever involving the people and institutions being surveyed. The result might have been a faster, smoother process and a tidy agenda on paper, but no interest at all on the part of the community. On the other hand, an active, participative approach to the surveys took more time than anticipated, presented difficulties, and resulted in shifting agendas, but assured community interest and further strengthened the networks.

We Learned About Adult Learners

Perhaps the most important single thing we have learned is that adults of all ages, both sexes, all racial and socioeconomic groups have tremendous needs for education and training. Because these five councils have chosen to concentrate their projects on a "most needy" population in their communities does not mean that other groups aren't in great need also. The assessments of adult learning needs done early in the project confirmed that adults of all classes and ages, employed as well as unemployed, need education and training in order to enter the workforce or to keep up with what is becoming more and more rapid change in the content of jobs.

On the other hand, we have learned that the lack of educa-

tion and training services may not be as severe a problem as the lack of information about their availability; lack of counseling services; lack of flexibility to accommodate adult learners; and lack of coordination and collaboration among education institutions, employers, and community service agencies to pool their knowledge of adult learners' needs, available resources, and information and outreach strategies.

Each of these five communities has enormous resources for adult learners among its education institutions and employer and union education and training programs, yet many adults in all five communities said they did not know what was available to them or how to go about finding out. Lack of accessible information appears to be the primary barrier to adults seeking further learning, for without information, there's no starting point.

The need for counseling for both education and employment appears to be the second major barrier. Even with information on services available, adults need assistance in charting a course, in making useful decisions. Perhaps we have concluded that adults are or should be able to sift through information about various educational routes and occupational choices and make their own decisions. The survey results from five communities tell us this isn't so; adults need information *and* assistance in making the best use of that information.

Lack of institutional flexibility to accommodate adult learners is a barrier that certainly exists in fact, but may also exist almost as much as a perceived barrier. Adults tend to think of educational institutions as being structured for youthful learners and may be hesitant to enter that environment. But the fact is that postsecondary institutions are desperate for students and many, if not most, would be willing to offer courses at times and in places that would interest adult learners, *if* they knew what adults wanted in terms of course content, class times, and locations. The educational institutions also need information and assistance.

The Adult Learners Project has enabled education-work councils in five communities to demonstrate that collaborative problem-solving and collaborative action can begin to remove these barriers to adult learning. The councils are acting as the catalysts to bring together education institutions, employers, and community service agencies in order to pool their knowledge of adult learners' needs, to develop

strategies to meet those needs, and to provide their communities with information about available resources.

A Common Problem

These five communities, like the rest of the nation, are in the midst of a period of turmoil brought on by the current economic situation. Budgets are being cut everywhere they turn. CETA programs are folding; the few counselors provided through CETA are gone. Educational institutions are suffering, employers are having to cut back on the number of employees and on their benefits, and social service agencies are going broke. Unemployment is high; even in Charleston and Worcester where this problem is perhaps not so desperate for the general population, unemployment is high for the populations the projects are focusing on. Unemployed people don't have the resources, financial or psychological, to return to education, and, in fact, may be barred from doing so if they are receiving unemployment insurance. The climate for introducing "community collaboration for adult learners" is not very welcoming, just when the need for such a strategy becomes more important.

A Common Outcome

In spite of the economic situation, in each of these five communities, there has been progress as a result of these projects. Paradoxically, shortages of resources often force people to collaborate in order to make the best use of the few available sources of support. The councils, both members and staff, have benefitted by working with new populations; the communities have benefitted by new collaborative alliances that are struggling to serve the adults of their communities with the resources at hand, and with much volunteer effort.

Next Steps

The variety of experiences we have been involved with during the Adult Learners Project have proven the effectiveness of certain practices. We are now confident that these demonstrations can be replicated successfully in many other communities. What is needed is a strong collaborative council of some kind willing to modify model programs to accommodate local situations and to provide support for a local effort. The achievements of the five education-work councils have taught us the power and potential of these local groups if they involve the appropriate players and if their interest is maintained by agenda items that seem to them to be relevant and timely.

Please contact us if your community is interested in building institutional collaboration among employers, educators, and others in the community to creatively expand adults' educational opportunities and improve the articulation between those opportunities and adults' working lives.

Portland Community College

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